SOME FURTHER RECORDS OF *CHRYSOLINA AMERICANA* (L.) (CHRYSOMELIDAE) IN LONDON

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Chrysolina americana (L.), the 'rosemary beetle', is a striking rainbow-coloured leaf beetle which, in spite of its misleading scientific name, is a characteristic insect of southern Europe where it is extremely abundant on rosemary *Rosmarinus officinalis* L. and lavender *Lavandula* spp. (Lamiaceae) in rural and urban areas. It is extending its range northwards in Europe, having recently reached Belgium (Lays, 1988) and The Netherlands (Beenen & Winkelman, 2001). It was first recorded potentially breeding in the UK at the Royal Horticultural Society Gardens at Wisley (TQ0558: VC17) (Halstead, 1996), and on lavender near the Shell Building, London (TQ3079: VC17) (Menzies, 1999). A single specimen was taken in a garden at Bookham Common (TQ1256: VC17) in 2000 (Barclay & Menzies, 2001) and specimens were taken in 1998 at Dinton Pastures Country Park (Halstead, 1999) and Winnersh (Smith, 2001), Berkshire (both SU77: VC22). There is also a colony in the grounds of the Tate Gallery, Middlesex (TQ3078: VC21) (BMNH Enquiries database, number 2000/68), and unpublished records from Leicestershire, Cambridgeshire, East Norfolk and Essex (Salisbury, 2002). Here we contribute some recent records and observations from London.

In September 2001 R.T. Thompson and P. R. Kirwan-Taylor took an example on 'curry plant' *Helichrysum* sp. (Asteraceae) in a garden near Walton Street, Chelsea (TQ2778: VC21); over the next week several more were found in the same garden on rosemary, a much more probable host-plant. Two specimens were taken walking on a wall in Imperial Road, Fulham (TQ2676: VC21), one at 11.30 p.m. on 9.x.2001 (DJM) and the other at 10.30 p.m. on 21.xi.2001 (MVLB). There was no obvious lavender or rosemary nearby, the only plant being a large Russian vine *Fallopia baldschuanica* (Regel) (Polygonaceae) which may have provided shelter for hibernation. On 10.x.2001 MVLB took an example, covered in dew, on a wall in Castelnau, Barnes (TQ2277: VC17) at 08.00 a.m. A garden nearby had recently planted rosemary and lavender bushes. It is noteworthy that the three last specimens had moved, by night, some distance from their host-plants. It is possible they were searching for suitable hibernation sites, but Salisbury (*loc. cit.*) suggests that the species remains active and feeds during warm spells throughout the winter months. Further observation of the species' seasonal behaviour in Britain may help to explain these nocturnal movements.

We visited the Shell Building colony twice during 2001. On the first occasion on 16.vi.2001 at 4 p.m. around 30 specimens were observed clustered, immobile on the flower heads of the lavender. On 17.x.01 at 6.15 p.m. the lavender plants had been cut right back, and only two *C. americana* were observed, running actively over the plants; perhaps members of this colony were also dispersing away from the host-plants. This colony has been present since at least 1997 (Menzies, 1999), and appears to be quite robust. Exhalant heating ducts which blow warm air over a part of the Shell Building colony may benefit the species by raising the ambient temperature by a

few critical degrees. Nonetheless, the colony's small size makes it very vulnerable to use of insecticides, change in land use, or irresponsible collecting.

It is difficult to say whether single specimens collected around London are the result of natural dispersal from existing populations, or whether they represent independent introductions with newly purchased plants or substrate from infested garden centres or abroad. Unlike many *Chrysolina*, *C. americana* is able to fly (Jolivet, 1997). The rosemary in the Walton Street garden was long established, while the plants in the Barnes garden appeared to be newly planted. Although apparently suitable patches of lavender exist all over London (where it is a ubiquitous street plant) the beetle is still extremely patchily distributed.

On 22.iii.2002 a female *C. americana* was noted on the wall in Imperial Road by MVLB suggesting that the species had successfully overwintered at this site. On 5.vi.2002 a specimen was brought to MVLB from Lavender in a garden at Merton Park, Wimbledon (VC17:TQ2469) by A. Galsworthy.

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SHORT COMMUNICATION

A gynandromorph of *Gonepteryx cleopatra* L. (Lepidoptera: Pieridae).—Purchased at the 1999 Amateur Entomologists' Society annual exhibition from Nigel South of Misterton, Somerset, who took it at Párga, Greece (39° 18′ N, 20° 23′ E) in May 1998, and presented at the 1999 BENHS annual exhibition (*British Journal of Entomology and Natural History*, **13**(3) p. 153 Plate 2, Fig. 10). The specimen is predominantly male with areas of pale green/white female coloration on all the wing surfaces. The data and dull yellow underside patches identify it as *G. c. cleopatra* f.